



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Eastside youth, residents to benefit from new neighborhood center

INDIANAPOLIS – Mayor Bart Peterson today joined leaders from the Community Alliance of the Far Eastside (CAFE) and United Way of Central Indiana to cut the ribbon on a new neighborhood center that will provide a variety of programs and services for eastside residents.

The Far Eastside Neighborhood Center, located at 8902 E. 38th Street, will serve residents of all ages. However, with nearly one-third of the area's population under the age of 18, an emphasis will be placed on providing year-round educational and recreational activities for young people from pre-school to high school age.

"This neighborhood center will help ensure the health and safety of our young people on the eastside by providing them with enjoyable, enriching activities and a positive environment after school and during the summer months," Mayor Peterson said. "Also, with numerous programs for adult residents, this center truly serves the entire community. I applaud CAFE and all the project partners for their leadership and hard work to improve the lives of far eastside residents."

The \$3.6 million center is the culmination of a partnership between CAFE, who led the initiative, and several other non-profit organizations and governmental agencies. The United Way of Central Indiana was the project's largest financial partner, contributing \$2 million.

"Through the hard work and unwavering efforts of so many residents, partners and funders, we have achieved the community's dream of a neighborhood center," CAFE Executive Director Anne-Marie Predovich said.

Formerly a vacant grocery and drug store, the location was transformed into the Far Eastside Neighborhood Center after CAFE, in partnership with the City of Indianapolis, Department of Metropolitan Development, engaged in a two-year study to examine needed improvements in the community. The study resulted in the creation of the Far Eastside Neighborhood Plan and identified the establishment of a neighborhood center as a top priority.

"In addition to providing a much-needed community resource, the re-use of a vacant building for our center creates another investment in the far eastside," Predovich said.

(more)

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Including a large space for recreational activities, the community center also provides a central location for several different organizations offering educational programs and neighborhood services. These organizations include Family Development Services, Inc./Head Start, which has started teaching classes at the center for 200 eastside children, and the Indianapolis Public Schools, offering GED courses four nights a week.

The building also will house CAFE's new offices, a Marion County Sherriff's Department sub-station and resource center, training and employment services provided by Goodwill Industries, a computer training room and an expanded program for far eastside senior citizens.

"CAFE's creation is really United Way's mission made visible," said Ellen Annala, President of United Way of Central Indiana. "This is the kind of outcome that's possible when people come together in community to care for one another."

"But the reality is that all the best planning and neighborhood organizing in the world can't accomplish anything without resources," Annala continued. "Thanks to those who give through United Way's annual campaign, centers like this one can offer effective programs every day to help people of all ages and circumstances succeed."

CAFE is currently working to raise funds to build a gymnasium on the east side of the building.

In addition to CAFE and the United Way of Central Indiana, other neighborhood center project partners include:

- ✓ Community Centers of Indianapolis, Inc., \$675,000
- ✓ The City of Indianapolis, \$318,000 (funding subsidized by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development)
- ✓ The Indianapolis Foundation, \$260,000
- ✓ Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust, \$250,000
- ✓ The State of Indiana, \$100,000 (Build Indiana Funds)
- ✓ The Clowes Fund, Inc. \$50,000

Incorporated in 1997, CAFE is a resident-driven organization that serves as a catalyst for positive community development within Indianapolis' far eastside.